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## My Note Book.

Leonato.—Are these things spoken or do I but dream?  
Don John.—Sir, they are spoken, and these things are true.  
—*Much Ado About Nothing.*



ARMENCITA, the Spanish dancer at Koster & Bial's music-hall, is just now the talk of the town, especially among the artists, some of whom have got her to pose for them at the studios, where they and their friends have gone wild with delight over her beauty and grace. Mr. Sargent, among others, has painted

her. It is odd how circumstances have driven this clever artist to return to his first great success—"El Jaleo," that wonderful scene in a Spanish tavern with the dancing woman balancing herself as if by magic, and the seated musicians seen dimly in the background sleepily thrumming away on guitars, while a woman leans forward from her chair and encourages the performer to renewed exertions. From Carmencita Mr. Sargent has found new inspiration in the same direction, and it is pleasant to hear that he is in a fair way to score another artistic triumph by it. But this is not his only new essay of the sort. Like every artist who visited the Paris International Exposition last summer, he was greatly impressed with the Oriental dancing women, whose performances served as side-shows there—those surprising creatures who dance from the hips up; and, being so impressed, he has painted some of them for his Royal Academy or New (London) Gallery picture probably. I suppose that it will be the aim now of all our ambitious young figure painters to go in for dancing women. But let them beware. It is dangerous ground for even the cleverest of them.

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It is really pitiful to hear of the noble "Angelus" being sneaked across the border into Canada—now that the New York Custom House bond exempting it from duty is about to expire—for all the world like a defaulting bank cashier. Well may Millet's peasants hang their heads for shame over that basket of potatoes!

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THE artistic glassware at the Union League Club on April 10th, though small, was well chosen to show the various kinds sought after by collectors. In one of the two cases were arranged all the pieces of antique Roman, Greek and Phœnician glass. In the other were the modern Venetian, French and German wares, and many curious pieces of Chinese and Persian origin. Of the opaque glass, banded with blue, green, purple and yellow, formerly described as of Egyptian or Phœnician make exclusively, now believed to be more commonly of Greek manufacture, there was no great variety. All the pieces shown were small and of the ordinary zigzag pattern. But among the (originally) clear Roman pieces were several of very beautiful form, notably a large urn belonging to Mr. Havemeyer, and many of them showed the most beautiful iridescent effects, ranging from delicate pearly tints to gorgeous shifting tones of metallic orange, apple green and vermilion. Some pieces of the modern Salviati glass shown were of great beauty.

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THE name of Salviati suggests to me the necessity of cautioning Americans to be careful in their dealings with that famous house, if they would avoid such an experience as has lately befallen a New York lady of my acquaintance. While in Venice she bought a quantity of Salviati glass, paid for it, and ordered it shipped to this city. Acting on the advice of the firm, she agreed to let them—so as to avoid the risk of breakage by unskilful opening of the case on its reaching the New York Custom House—add to her bill the amount of the duty. The case duly arrived in New York, with several others of the same kind. One, which was for a well-known art collector of St. Louis, attracted official attention on account of its great size, that suggested undervaluation. The suspicion proved to be justified, and then a close examination was made of the other Salviati cases. The goods in each instance were undervalued in the invoices, and I understand that they were all confiscated. At

least the purchases of the New York lady were. She has sought redress from Salviati, but so far without success.

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THE collection of water-colors that accompanied the exhibition of artistic glass at the Union League Club showed a wide range indeed—say from Ranger to Meissonier and from Horatio Walker to Barye. It was interesting, by the way, to compare the lions and tigers of Barye with similar beasts of Lançon. The latter showed full technical knowledge of the medium used. Barye none at all. After all, though, there is a charm in the naïveté of Barye's water-colors which no admirer of his would want to exchange for the better painting of Lançon. Mr. John A. Fraser, an English water-color painter of landscape whose work is new to this country, made his début at the Club under the auspices of Messrs. Boussod, Valadon & Co. His color is pleasing and his "impressionism" is of a fresh and original kind. His direct use of transparent washes is characteristically English, and quite refreshing in its simplicity after the rather messy Dutch methods to which we have tried to get accustomed of late, from some of the best of our own men. Every method of water-color technic could be studied in the collection. Among the foreign masters were Louis Leloir, Rico, Fortuny and Boldini, on the one hand, for lightness and transparency; on the other, Vibert, Mauve and Maris, with more or less love for body color. Among our own men were Blum, Percy and Leon Moran, devotees of the sparkling Spanish-Romanesque methods, and, in contrast to them, Horatio Walker, Ranger and Murphy. Mrs. Rhoda Holmes Nicholls represented what is best in the modern English school, and Winslow Homer an improved American adaptation of it. I do not know exactly where to place Mr. Weir, Mr. Church and Mr. Ridgway Knight; nor Mr. Beckwith, whose little sketch of a graceful girl in a boat "On the Seine" was one of the prettiest, daintiest bits of color in the exhibition. Others of the water-colors, interesting in themselves, had little technical merit. Such were the delightful "Three Advocates" by Daumier, and the same artist's hastily washed-in portrait sketch of "Papa" Corot under the trees, protected from the sun by a big garden hat, owned by Mr. Durand-Ruel, who will lend the sketch for reproduction in *The Art Amateur*.

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THE following is clipped from the editorial columns of the New York World:

The artists of the Academy of Design, aping the fashion of the members of the Royal Academy in London, gave a dinner to themselves and a few so-called Art patrons in the large gallery of the Academy last evening. Unlike the English wielders of the brush whom they are so desirous of emulating in a social "function," however, they carefully excluded the Art critics and writers upon whom they are dependent oftentimes for the sale of their works, and whose aid they do not hesitate to solicit for their Artist Fund and personal sales, and kindly condescended to "admit reporters after the dinner." This is a broad and liberal manner of introducing a new English custom.

The artists paid for their own dinners, and surely they had a perfect right to draw the line at "art critics and writers," in making out their invitation list.

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IT is not easy to imagine the dinner at the Academy much resembling the stately gathering at Burlington House, presided over by the handsome president of the Royal Academy, glorious in scarlet robes and great gold chain of office. This banquet is a swell social function for which even the largest picture buyer—they do not call him "art patron" there—might and often does strive in vain for an invitation. In this democratic country things, of course, are very different. Any respectable person, if his purse be long enough, may become an "art patron" in twenty-four hours, with all the privileges of that proud distinction. But it should be remembered that in New York the "art patron" is of decided importance to the artist, and the latter would be very foolish not to cherish him. "I have come to swap some of my pictures for some of yours," said Gillot, the steel pen inventor, to Turner, exhibiting a tempting roll of crisp Bank of England notes, and it is said that the great landscape painter at once saw the joke and the exchange was effected. I hope, I am sure, that many a like exchange of pictures has resulted from the dinner at the "Academy," which is said to have been a very enjoyable affair.

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THE painter George F. Watts has announced that henceforth he shall waive his right to exhibit at the Royal Academy without undergoing the ordeal of the jury, but will submit his work to the same system used for paintings by men who are not R. A.'s. The Royal Academy this year has 10,000 pictures from which

to choose the 2000 that can find wall space.—*New York Times.*

As our Academicians are going in for English fashions, let them adopt this excellent example of Mr. Watts.

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THE English journal, *The Artist*, complains that Paris papers are in the habit of saying that such and such a picture has been sold "à des Américains"—that is, to agents from the United States. "French writers," it adds, "always ignore Canada, the Brazils and other outlandish parts of America as completely as the citizens of the United States are accustomed to do."

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OF the "Exposition des Peintres-Graveurs" at the Paris Galeries Durand-Ruel, Emile Cardon says, in the *Moniteur des Arts*, that its chief attraction is in the unforeseen character of the works exhibited. In this he "says ditto" to M. Philippe Burty, who informs us that the novelty is above all in the printing of the plates. This painter-etcher has special inks; that one combines etching with lithography. M. Chéret "frames in pastels born in a dream, underlined by a burst of laughter." That, indeed, must be a novelty. "Quel maître!" adds M. Burty. M. Cardon has made a different sort of discovery in the person of Colonel Goff, an amateur English etcher whose views in Holland and London, it seems, are very original. Like his countryman, Mr. Seymour-Haden, the Colonel seems to choose to make his first bow before a Parisian public.

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ANOTHER exhibition at the Durand-Ruel galleries in Paris is that of the works of Ivan Aïvasovsky, a Russian painter of great ability, it is said. From the catalogue before us, his subjects appear to be chiefly marine, ranging from the Crimea to Monte Carlo. On the opening day, the President of France and his wife visited the exhibition, being received by the artist, the Russian Ambassador, the Minister of Fine Arts, and Mr. Durand-Ruel.

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MR. CONSTANT, in a Paris journal, deplores that the example of the merchant princes and bankers of the sixteenth century, munificent patrons of the arts, is not followed in our own times. He must mean that those of to-day bring with their money less true appreciation of the arts than those in the days of old; for certainly our "millionaires" lavish their money freely enough, in all conscience. Even on this point, however, Mr. Benjamin Constant is probably at fault; the vulgar and ignorant "millionaire" is certainly conspicuous, enough to discredit the connoisseurship of the whole class of "merchant princes and bankers," but there have never been more enlightened and generous patrons of the arts than certain "merchant princes and bankers" of the nineteenth century, both in this country and in Europe.

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SOME of the writers for the press, in noticing the collection of etchings at Wunderlich's, I see, insist on calling Mr. Seymour-Haden "Dr.," just as they did when he visited this country. He is a surgeon only, and in England that carries the simple prefix of "Mr." Were he an "M.D." or physician, then he would be called "Dr." It is odd that this distinction between surgeon and physician, which is very marked in England, seems understood by few persons in this country.

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SO it is to Kate Field that we are indebted for the report of the Tariff Bill Committee in favor of free art! Mr. Beckwith, President of the Free Art League, had argued before it, followed by Mr. Kenyon Cox, Secretary of the League, and Mr. W. C. Coffin, whose able speech, it is said, made a deep impression; but it would seem that it was not until bonny Kate appeared, in her new Easter attire, that the Committee was really convinced. I quote her own words, from her sprightly periodical, *Kate Field's Washington*:

"I argued before the House Committee in French gown, cloak and bonnet, and one clever man told me that 'the gown did it.' Do I pay sixty per cent extra for fun? No, no. I always give the preference to American productions when possible; but no woman will make a fright of herself for the sake of country, and no man would thank her if she did. Make art free, and our artisans will design better eventually than the French. All they need is inspiration by seeing the best daily. Then time will develop what lies latent."

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THE article from which this is taken bears the fascinating title "Who is Thomas Donaldson?" That is what we all want to know; but unfortunately Miss Field does not answer the question. We are still in the dark why this lobbyist, who is in no way connected with the Government, on the one hand, or has any interest in

art, on the other, should persistently persecute the artists by insisting that they need protection when they cry out that they do not want to be "protected," but only want to be let alone. No sooner does the Tariff Bill Committee report in favor of free art than this extraordinary person renews his efforts to defeat the measure. This time, however, it has the support of the (Republican) Secretary of State and of Mr. Whitelaw Reid, editor of the influential (Republican) New York Tribune; so that it is somewhat relieved of the old-time odium of being a "free-trade" scheme. The fate of the bill will be watched with great interest by all friends of free art. In the mean time, the question, "Who is Thomas Donaldson?" is likely to pass into history in the same category of unsolved enigmas as the query seeking to disclose the identity of the slayer of the once notorious Mr. William Patterson. MONTEZUMA.

#### THE "ACADEMY" EXHIBITION.

THE National Academy of Design was understood, two or three years ago, to have undergone a change of heart, and to have definitely reformed. This year, however, for the Spring Exhibition, the Hanging Committee is thought to have done a trifle worse than usual, and the Committee of Selection certainly not any better, so that it may really be feared that the reformation of the Academy is like that of that other venerable metropolitan institution, Tammany Hall. However, there have been worse exhibitions in these same galleries than the present one, and if many of the old, familiar landmarks are still visible there are certain new features, contributed by outsiders mostly, that are interesting.

For the old ones, there is a portrait by Mr. Huntington—that of James Lenox, owned by the Lenox Library—hung in the centre of honor in the South Gallery; there is the familiar "Fall of the Year," by Mr. McEntee (though it is to be wished that all the familiar things were as good); there are the usual landscapes by other honorable Academicians hung on the line, including even an Arctic scene by William Bradford; there is a domestic genre by Thomas Hicks, and the familiar animal jokes by William H. Beard. One of the latter, however, is a very fearsome allegory, in which Death, as a strangler, disposes of tigers, elephants and other wild beasts. There is the old-fashioned military picture by Julian Scott, ragged Continentals on guard duty; one of E. L. Henry's careful, spotty little paintings—this time of a buggy and its occupants in imminent danger of destruction by a railway train—which, as usual, is one of the first pictures to find a buyer; one of Mr. Hovenden's potboilers, a little girl who brings her broken doll to be mended; a big marine view, the "English Channel," by Mr. De Haas. There are two paintings by E. Wood Perry, one of them a large and woodeny "Breton Family." J. G. Brown abandons his bootblacks for the moment and sends his two old women talking over old times—"When we were Girls Together" it is called—which we noticed on the occasion of its exhibition at the Union League Club. He also contributed a young woman in a boat. By the younger associates there is, by Will H. Low, a large and rather thinly painted picture of a nude young nymph disarming Cupid, apparently intended for a decoration, and, among other things, an unsatisfactory little fairy distilling "The Dew on the Roses," by Charles C. Curran, who used to do much better things. Of the sculpture, there is an ambitious group of the good old-fashioned didactic allegory, a helpless female figure beset by an eagle or a vulture, and a heroic little-headed, long-limbed male who comes to the rescue. And there are the very little, very carefully detailed paintings which the critics of the daily paper hail as "Meissonier-like."

Mr. Shirlaw is represented by a study of a female figure, called "Rufina," which has already been commended in these columns as beautiful in the color and quality of its warm flesh tones. Mr. Millet, also an "N.A.," sends probably the best picture he ever painted—"Antony Van Corlear, Trumpeter," big and handsome, taking his ease in his inn or in his neighbor's house, and surrounded by cheerful and admiring wives and maidens. This picture we have also noticed at length. Like Beckwith's portrait of the handsome lady with the fur cloak, which represents him here, it was seen at the Paris Exposition. Mr. Hartley, the sculptor, furnishes a large portrait bust of John Gilbert as "Sir Peter Teazle," full of spirit and vigor of workmanship and an excellent likeness. Mr. Dolph continues without a rival in this country as a painter of cats. Mr. Champney sends "Gathering

Mountain Laurel," a landscape with figures more broadly painted than usual. Among the Academicians who remain about stationary is Mr. Maynard, who has been devoting himself, apparently, for the last two or three years to painting mermaids and blue seas. The present example is about as good as the first one of the series; the color is pleasant and decorative rather than true; the nude swimmers are about as chilly in flesh tones and no prettier or more mysterious than their predecessors. Francis C. Jones has done better things than his present "Escaped, in the Desert," a slim girl in curious pale draperies and a dishevelled old man crouched behind some rocks and looking out over a strange, white waste at the approaching caravan.

Much of the most interesting work, however, and some two or three of the pictures that rise to serene heights of merit, are furnished by the outsiders. Chief among these is Henry Oliver Walker's "Mother and Child," a curiously quiet, grave and beautiful study of a young mother nursing her baby. His half-length figure of a "Rosalind" in white is also very good in quality and design, but hardly one's ideal of Shakespeare's heroine of the wood of Ardenne. A still better half-length study is that of the young girl by G. M. Stone, of Boston, which he calls "Leukopis." This and Mr. Walker's "Mother" and Mr. Shirlaw's "Rufina" are among the very best paintings of flesh in the exhibition, though Mr. Shirlaw's tones are as warm and rich as those of the others are pale and chaste. There are a good many nude studies by the better painters, among them one by Kenyon Cox, "The Approach of Love." A red-haired nymph, asleep in rather an uncomfortable attitude upon what seems to be half a bathtub, is approached by a reddish little Cupid, the scene taking place in a sombre, very warm landscape. Mr. Cox's portrait of a little boy in sailor costume will please many more visitors. Mrs. Amanda Brewster Sewell has also gone to Arcadia, and shows us a group of lightly clad damsels seated and standing in a pleasant wide valley and listening to a boy fluting. The drawing is, for the most part, very good, and there is a nice feeling for color. Mr. Denman paints what he calls "A Ballad of Life," in which a nude young woman, holding some sort of an archaic musical instrument, and who might have been designed by Lucas Cranich, so very mediæval is she, advances toward three or four handsomely costumed youths, one of whom kneels to her. What it all means is beyond the comprehension of common mortals. Robert V. V. Sewell sends two large compositions, one of some slim boys sunning themselves after their swim, and one in which an antique harper tells a "Tale of Troy" to three listeners, two lovers and a slave girl.

E. L. Weeks is represented by two works, in one of which a group of natives chaffer in front of a brass bazaar in India, one of them mounted upon a horse apparently of the same material as the white plaster walls. William J. Whittemore's bored little girl in a green dress spending a "Long Half Hour" over her piano lesson is natural and well painted, and so are the two puppies who hang helplessly over the arms of the third "Vagabond" in Clifford Grayson's picture. Mr. TARBELL's cabinet portrait of a slender, pale girl in sombre attire, playing upon a very black violin, looks as though it might have been done by a clever pupil of Mr. Dewing, who has made popular this miniature-like style of picture. In a well-merited place of honor in the South Gallery is Mr. Dewing's handsome young brunette in black, with sapphire eyes and Clouet-like hands—at once a portrait of great distinction and a beautifully painted picture.

The old story of telling the bees is represented again on a large canvas by Hugo Breuil. A very careful, spirited rendering of an impromptu duel after dinner in the good old days, by Frederick James, is only marred by some thinness and crudeness in the painting. The action and characterization are admirable, and assure us that this new-comer will be better known before long. Very charming, but a good deal as though she were in porcelain, is Frank Benson's "Girl in White;" very well managed, in her multitudinous reds, is S. W. Van Schaick's "Reader," and very rich in color each, but rather spotty as a composition, are Mr. Blum's two maids in the grass consulting "Love's Oracle." Horatio Walker furnishes some more pigs, as well painted as ever; there is the usual abundance of good landscapes by Messrs. Palmer, Sartain, Bolton Jones, Murphy, Bruce Crane, Swain Gifford, Shurtleff and others.

The portrait by Mr. Chase of a little girl in a Spanish costume is ingenious and interesting, and that of Mr. Le

Gendre, for the Calumet Club, with his hands in his trousers' pockets, is very natural and plausible-looking. There is also one of Admiral Farragut by Professor John F. Weir, of Yale; one of a little girl by Eastman Johnson, not in his best style; one by Wyatt Eaton; a good one of Mr. Henry G. Marquand by George B. Butler, and one of Mr. Shirlaw by Frank Fowler which is not very much like him. Mr. Brush sends a careful study of a broad-chested, low-browed, red-haired woman whom he calls "A Celtic Huntress"—as good a name as any other—and an exceedingly careful anatomical study of a nude male seated in a grotto and harping to some foolish hares, whom he calls "Orpheus"—not a very good name, since the dominant impression conveyed to the spectator's mind is not that of the dispensation of heavenly harmony, but that of the painter's anxiety over his flesh painting. Gilbert Gaul's battle picture, rather painty and somewhat more mannered than usual, shows a "color-bearer" stripped to his torn shirt, a fifer and two drummer boys leading the charge. In the background are two officers, one immovable and phlegmatic, his thumbs stuck in his belt; the other, with his waxed mustache and his cut of hair, looking as though he had strayed over from the Confederate lines, carries his pistol in one hand and flourishes his cap on the point of his sword. And Mr. Weir has a beautiful scene, in which three or four dogs sit comfortably around the fire. The display of sculpture is larger and rather better than usual; one or two pieces have already been alluded to, and among the others are a vigorous bust of Frank B. Sanborn by Mr. Elwell, and a very graceful one of a young girl by Mr. French.

#### MINOR EXHIBITIONS.

THE movement, as we suppose we must call it, in favor of small exhibitions of works by one or a few artists grows apace. At Avery's Galleries Mr. Swain Gifford succeeded Mr. Picknell with a collection of landscapes which did more than maintain his high reputation. The artist retains his well-known fondness for country within reach of the sea breeze, on which he usually turns his back, with the cedars and gnarled apple-trees he paints so well. Old orchards with broken stone walls; salt marshes patched with brown and yellow; sand-hills and barrens fill most of his canvases. This time, however, he had ventured down to the shore, and his "Gathering Sea-weed," the most important of his recent pictures, was the result. It is in many ways a novel essay for the painter. The horses and the figure of the sea-weed gatherer are the main motive; the landscape, or rather sea-scape, is but the background to them. They make an impressive group, the horses facing the spectator and well foreshortened, the man a little to the left, bending over a streak of brown sea-wrack. The tone, rather cooler than usual, is very beautiful. It is a big picture, nearly filling one end of the gallery. Some brown landscapes in the Munich manner, by a Berlin artist of repute, Karl Heffner, followed Mr. Gifford's works.

A collection of proofs of wood-engravings and of relief and intaglio prints produced by a new method, the works of Mr. W. B. Closson, were shown at Keppel's Gallery, March 24th to April 5th. The wood-cuts were shown before at the Grolier Club, and the prints due to the new method at Boston. Most of these last appear to have been printed in a copper-plate or etching press, some with retouching. A few seem to have been printed as wood-cuts are. Both are said to be from engravings of the same sort; the former, we presume, from the plate itself, the latter from an electrotype or stereotype cast of it, perhaps backed by solid metal to permit of the extra pressure necessary. The method, in which Professor C. E. Norton shows, in some published remarks, a considerable interest, is kept secret. Of the results we can say that the relief prints equal very good wood-engravings; the others are indistinguishable from ordinary etchings. Many of the designs, of Mr. Closson's own invention, such as "The Swallow's Race," with an Ariel-like figure, show a lively and poetic fancy.

At the American Art Galleries an important innovation has been made in holding at the same time special exhibitions of choice works of ten more or less well-known American artists. Each man's pictures are grouped together; and as he is not restricted to works not before exhibited, he is, in most cases, enabled to make a fair showing of his strength. The result, we should judge, must be as pleasing to the artists as it certainly is to the public. Mr. W. M. Chase, though none of his most important pictures are included, has the most varied and